

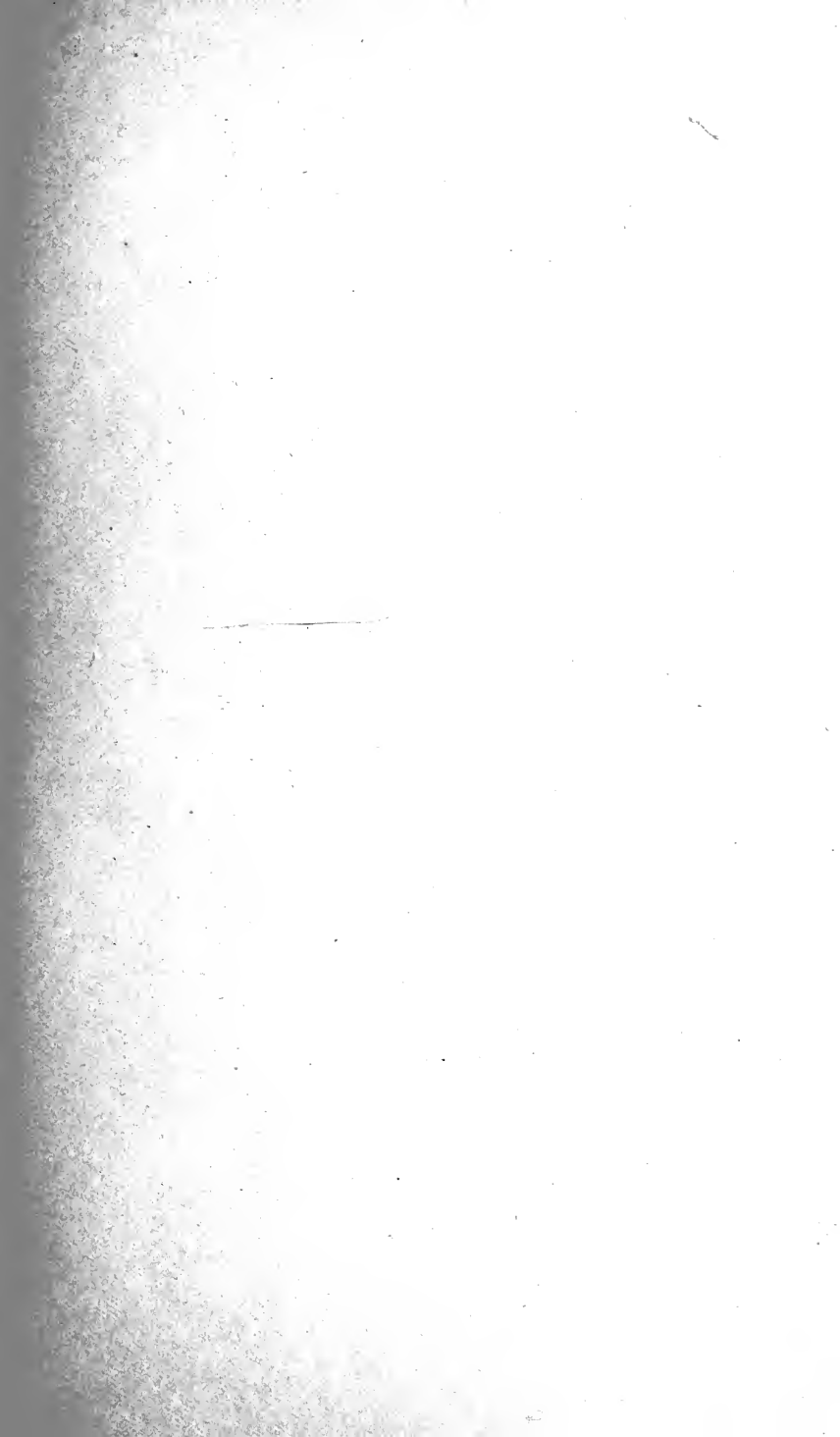
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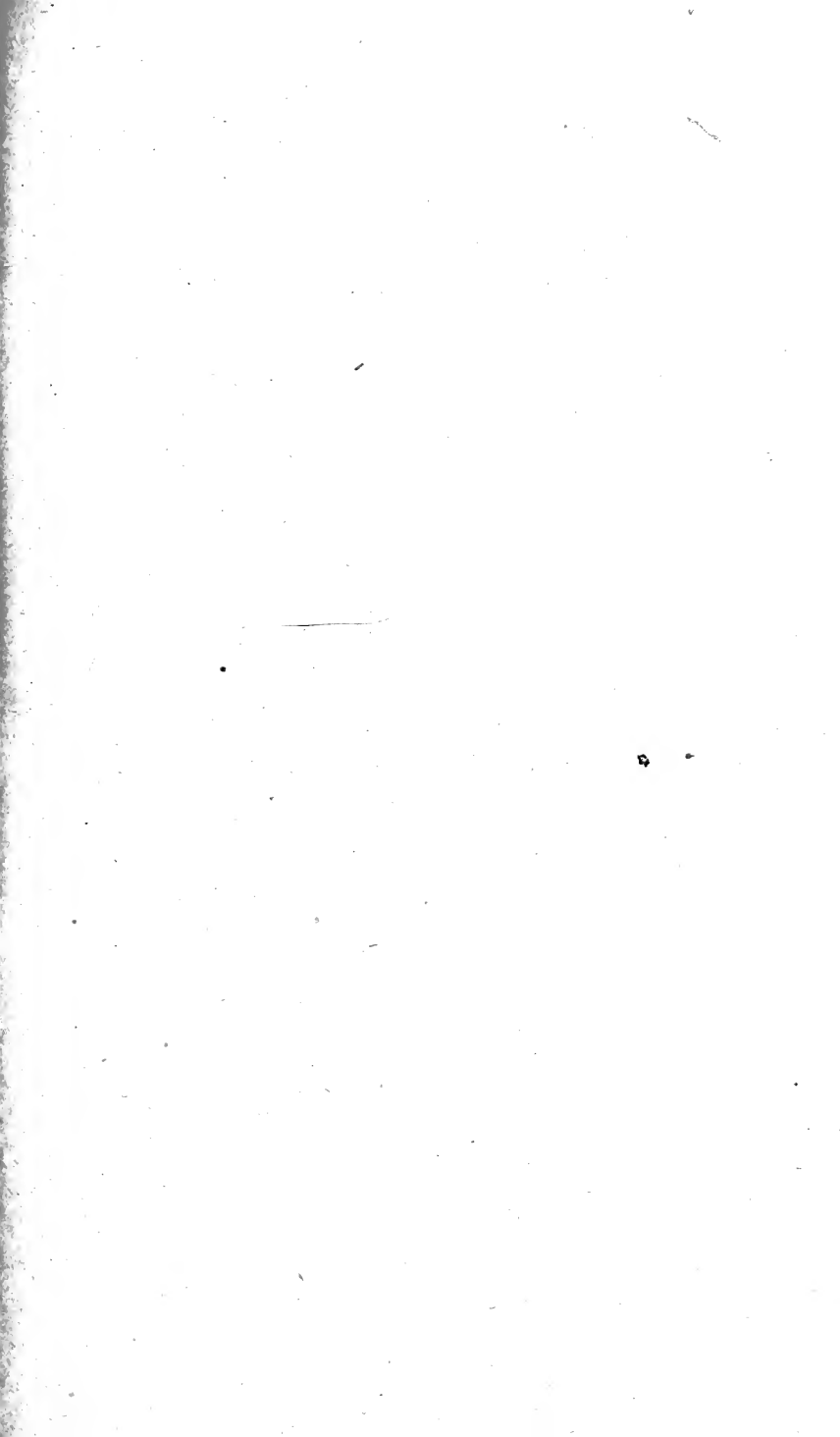
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THE
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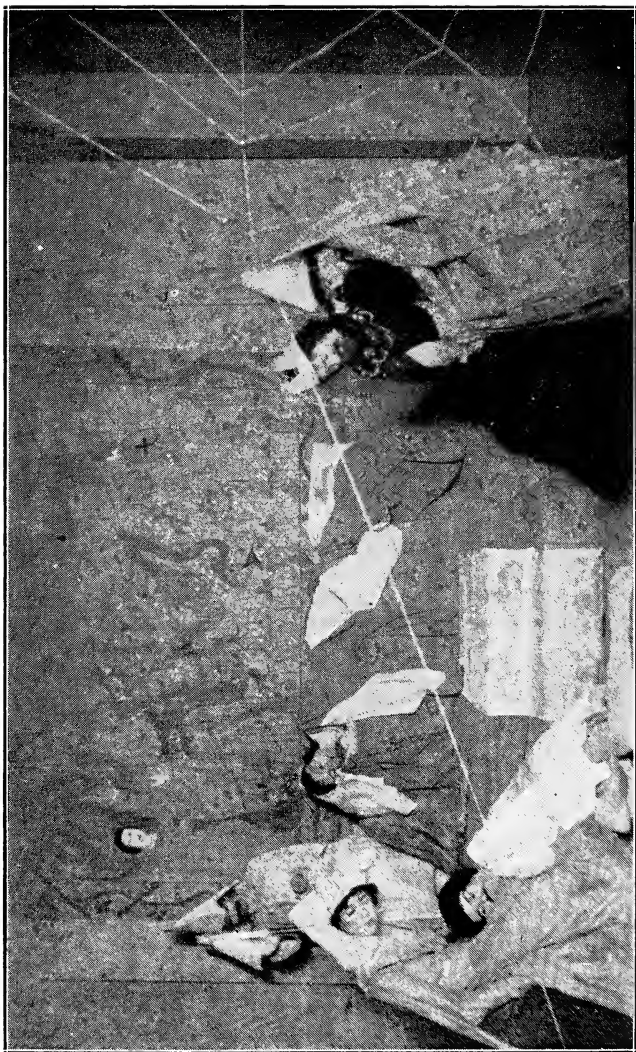
A PLAY —
WITH OR WITHOUT
PAGEANTRY

BY
THEODORA DU BOIS









THE SLEEPING PALACE

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY

THEODORA DU BOIS

AS PRODUCED BY THE
WORKSHOP PLAYERS OF YONKERS

*This play may be given with much PAGEANTRY,
if desired*



AMATEURS ARE GIVEN PERMISSION TO PRESENT THIS PLAY, BUT
NO PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE MAY TAKE PLACE
WITHOUT CONSENT OF THE AUTHOR.

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no 1

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY*

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY

THEODORA DU BOIS.

ACT I.

In the Second Best Throne Room of the King and Queen.

ACT II. (*Sixteen years later.*)

Scene 1. Same as Act I.

Scene 2. In the Palace Attics.

Scene 3. Same as Act I.

ACT III. (*A hundred years later.*)

Scene 1. Outside the Dragon-proof Hedge.

Scene 2. In the Second Best Throne Room of the King and Queen.

(The First Act takes twenty-four minutes to play, the Second Act takes twenty-four minutes to play, and the Third Act takes fifteen minutes to play.

*(See note 1 at end of play).

PEOPLE OF THE PLAY.*

The King.

The Queen.

The Princess.

The Prince.

Fairy of the Golden Isles.

Fairy of the Crystal Mountains.

Fairy of the Silver Rivers.

Fairy of the Sable Caves.

The Page.

The Courtier. } Same person.

Attendant to Princess.

Gentlemen In Waiting to Prince.

ACT I.

*The curtain rises, showing the Second Best Throne Room of the King and Queen. It may either be hung with softly draped curtains, or have walls, representing gray rock, hung with old tapestries behind the throne and on the side walls. There is one entrance at the right, near the rear wall. In the center rear is a dais, and upon it a divan. At the right of the dais, near the front of the stage, is a chest. Opposite, at the left, is a cradle, with a small stool near by.***

The King is seated on the divan, which is the throne, half facing the right wall, working out a plan of battle with toy knights on a board. The Queen is seated on the chest, facing the audience. She is surrounded by half opened parchments, and is scribbling in a hurried, worried, manner, with a quill pen. Both she and the King are dressed for the christening, and are wearing crowns.

*(See note 2 at end of play.)

** (See note 3 at end of play.)

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

ACT I.

QUEEN (*frantically*).

Oh dear, I'm having such an awful time!

KING (*not looking up*).

What's that?

QUEEN.

Oh yes, you always say, "What's that?"

Oh dear!

KING.

Yes, here my knights would make a charge.

QUEEN.

Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear, what can I do?

KING (*mildly*).

I'm sure I don't know. What's the matter dear?—

These knights would steal up in the dark, and then—

QUEEN (*interrupting crossly*).

And then they'd all be killed, I surely hope.

KING.

My dear, but what an odd remark to make.

QUEEN (*biting her pen*).

Well, you'd say odd things, too, if you were me.

KING (*reprovingly*).

"If you were I," my dear, you should have said.

You are so careless in these little things,

I can't imagine what your school was like.

QUEEN.

I never went to school, I've told you that.

A nice old wizard taught me everything.

KING (*not much interested*).

Ah, yes, arithmetic, and things like that—

QUEEN.

No, elementary magic! nothing dull

Like spelling, writing, and arithmetic.
We used to have a lesson every day:
Transforming things, stones into little cakes
With icing,—useful things like that *we* learned.
(*She turns back to her work.*)
Oh dear, I simply can not get this straight!

KING.

What is that you want to do my dear?

QUEEN.

I'm copying the baby's Christening list
To give the steward—so he'll know the names
Of all the people that I've asked to come.
And now I cannot read the names myself.
I wrote them in a hurry. I don't know
Who is invited now—or who is not.
The thing is in a simply awful mess,
And now its getting late, and all the guests
Will be there in a minute! Dear, oh dear!

KING (*Gets up and comes to her side. He takes up
the parchments and puzzles over them.*)

The writing is a bit like beetle tracks—

QUEEN.

Oh hurry, do, its really awfully late.

KING (*frowning*).

Let's see whom you've asked first. What names are
these?

QUEEN.

Those are my cousins, you remember them,
They gave us that enchanted silver bowl
When we were married.

KING.

Yes, oh yes, of course.
The Fairy of the Golden Isles—I see—

The Fairy of the Silver Rivers, and
The Fairy of the Crystal Mountains. Yes,
I do remember them now, perfectly.
Nice fairies, too. How stupid to forget.
Who are all these?

QUEEN.

They're the more common guests
Who'll just come in for tea this afternoon,
After our ceremonies all are through.

KING.

Ah, Cinderella and the Prince, I see.
Bluebeard? (*very angrily.*) I don't see why you asked
that man!

QUEEN.

His wife is my *best* friend.

KING (*with meaning*).

She won't be, long.

Who'se this? Aladdin?

QUEEN.

Yes, he's visiting.

KING.

King Cole—I hope *he* comes. Perhaps he'll stay
And smoke a pipe after the rest have gone.

(*reading hurriedly.*)

Fairy of hum te- hum- te-hum te- hum,
King of the hum te- hum te- hum te- hum,
Queen hum- te- de, King tum te tum te tum,
Te tum- te tum—King of the Pearly-gates.
Prince of the Pomgranate Garden-tum- te- tum—
My gracious, but you've surely asked a lot.

QUEEN (*proudly*).

Yes, it's the biggest party ever held
In all the kingdoms. Baby should be proud.

(*She looks in the cradle.*)

That all this great big party's just for her,
Just for her Christening. Oh the sweetum's thing.
See—see—the duckie!

KING.

Shsh—don't wake her up.

(He looks at the list again.)

What's this name here that seems to be scratched out?

QUEEN.

Why I don't know, I'm sure. What can it be?

KING.

It looks like "Stable Calves"—it can't be that,
Now can it? That's an awfully funny name
It seems to me, for any fairy. Why,
The "Fairy of the Stable Calves"—Oh no!
I'm sure we don't know anyone like that.

QUEEN *(recognizing it)*.

I know—it's "Fairy of the Sable Caves"!

KING *(amazed)*.

Gadzooks! Aunt Fairy of the Sable Caves!

QUEEN *(sitting down on the edge of the dais in horror)*.

I'm 'fraid I've done a simply dreadful thing!
What shall I do! I wrote that name down last,
And scribbled it so badly, that, well, that
When I sent all my invitations off
I couldn't read her name, and so I thought
That it was something that had been scratched out,
And so, and so—

KING *(angrily)*.

Odds-bodkins! zounds! gadzooks!
Then do you mean she wasn't asked at all?

QUEEN *(sulkily)*.

Such language isn't necessary dear.

KING (*half apologetically but still angry*).
Well, I forgot—I'm sorry—but my sweet,—
You didn't send her invitation off?
Aunt Fairy of the Sable Caves left out!
Zounds, she'll be simply raving when she hears!
Her temper's worse than twenty bottles bees!

QUEEN (*going toward King*).
It's just a social error, dear, that's all.
I'm awfully sorry—'cause she is your aunt,
But then, to tell the truth, I never did,
I never could have liked her, very much.

KING.
She surely has a frightful temper. Zounds!
I wouldn't have offended her for worlds!
It's just your carelessness again my dear.
She may be very horrid over this.
If you would *only* be more careful, pet.

QUEEN (*starting to weep*).
Oh yes, I'll try. I truly will. Oh dear!

KING (*nervously walking up and down*).
I wonder if there's anything to do.
A note apologizing? It's too late.
Well, well. We'll simply make the best of it.

(*Queen flings herself weeping on
the divan.*)

QUEEN.
Oh everything is just too horrible.
I'd rather be a rabbit or a toad,
Or anything alive (*sob*) except a queen.

KING (*trying to quiet her*).
There, there, my dear, there, there, now stop, you must.
You'll wake the baby. Stop! your eyes will be
All red and puffy for the Christening.

Get up and put your crown on straight, at once.
And put some powder on your nose. Now come—
Or else you know you'll be a perfect sight.

QUEEN (*sobbing*).

I am one anyway, so I don't care.

KING (*frantically*).

Get up I say. Now do be sensible.

*(Page enters, bows with formality
and stands at attention.)*

PAGE (*in loud and even tones*).

Oh, great and glorious ruler of this realm,
Oh fair and beauteous queen of all the land,
A guest awaits, in thy reception hall,
And rests her from her journey.

KING.

What's the name?

PAGE (*still at attention*).

"The Fairy of the Golden Isles," oh king.

(Queen jumps to her feet.)

QUEEN.

I haven't even time to fix my hair (*She fixes it*).
You should have told me it was getting late.
(She dabs her face with a little powder puff.)
My eyes look better now I think, don't you?

KING (*Takes a handkerchief and wipes a tear away
from the side of her cheek*).

There, that's the last old tear—no one would know
You'd ever cried in all your life. That's fine!

QUEEN.

Now, is my crown on straight?

KING.

Oh yes, it's fine.

How is my collar? Is it very mussed?

QUEEN.

No, not a bit. (*She looks in cradle*). The baby's still asleep.

Just see how sweet! (*She sits down primly on the divan.*)

I think we're ready now.

KING (*taking up the parchment list of names from the chest*).

Give this unto the steward, boy. But first
Announce the Fairy of the Golden Isles.

(*The Page bows and backs out.
The King straightens the room up
a little.*)

KING.

I'm sure I hope the banquet is all right.

QUEEN.

Everything came except the pomgranates,
And rainbow fish instead of golden carp! (*Annoyed.*)

KING.

Well, we can do without them, I suppose.

QUEEN.

I hope those young spring peacocks won't be tough,
And that the Roc's egg omelette isn't flat.

KING (*Sits beside Queen on divan. In doing so he rests his hand behind her, and then suddenly leaps to his feet*).

Ouch—Ouch! (*putting finger in mouth.*)

QUEEN (*anxious*).

Oh dear, whatever have you done?

KING (*mumbling*).

I've pricked it like the very mischief, dear.

QUEEN.

Pricked it—what on?

KING (*crossly*).
On something sharp, of course.

QUEEN.
Oh I'm so sorry! Let me see it, do.

KING.
It's bleeding! Ouch!

QUEEN (*tearing her handkerchief*).
Here, do it up with this. (*She winds it around his finger.*)

I wonder if that page has hidden tacks
Beneath our cushions.

KING (*fiercely*).
If he has—I'll just—
(*Page enters and bows low. The King sits down suddenly.*)

PAGE.
Oh great and gracious king of all this realm.

KING (*interrupting in a dreadfully fierce voice*)
Stop that—come here—no, nearer, on your knees.
(*The Page obeys, terrified.*)

Tell me the truth now sirrah—did you put
Tacks underneath these cushions? If you did
I'll send you to my deepest dungeon dark
Beneath the castle moat, and for a month,
Feed you on bread and water. Now, the truth!

PAGE (*terrified*).
Oh no great ruler; no, I never did.

KING.
Then tell me what it was that pricked my hand.

PAGE (*picking up from the divan beside the King, one of the lead knights he had been manouvering at the beginning of the play.*)

Mayhap, oh king, you pricked your hand on this. (*He holds up the little knight, and the King touches its spear gingerly.*)

KING.

I guess that's it. They're spilled all over here. The spear is awfully sharp. Here, hide them quick. Pick that one up before the guests arrive. (*He sweeps knights into his hand and gives them to the Page.*)

QUEEN.

Just stick them underneath the throne.
(*Page obeys.*)

KING.

That's right.
What was it now, you were about to say.

PAGE (*rising, but trembling*).
Oh kind and gracious ruler of this land,
Oh thrice fair beauteous and lovely queen,
The Fairy of the Golden Isles is now
Approaching, up the gold and marble stairs.

KING.

We will receive our cousin, with all joy.

PAGE (*backs out*).

I go, oh king, benign and bounteous.

KING (*to Queen*).

I only hope the baby stays asleep.
She's apt to yell so awfully when she wakes.

PAGE (*standing at the door*).

The Fairy of the Golden Isles is come.

(*The Fairy of the Golden Isles enters, beautifully dressed, carrying a golden ball on a cushion.*)

(*She kneels before the King and Queen who kiss her solemnly on the forehead.*)

KING.

All welcome cousin, on this Christening day,
All welcome for our daughter and ourselves.

QUEEN.

All welcome cousin of the Golden Isles.
Our hearts dance like the golden blooms of spring
To see you here.

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

And mine rejoices, too.
Sings, and is glad, like wind-kissed daisy fields.
Sings, and is glad on this glad Christening day.

QUEEN (*changing to an informal manner*).
Now don't you want to see our baby?

Why!

How well you're looking! What a lovely dress!
(*They all rise and look into the cradle, speaking rather low.*)

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

Oh what a darling! Why you never said
How awfully sweet she was.

QUEEN.

She *is* quite sweet.

KING (*turning his moustach proudly*).
We seem to like her rather well, you know.

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

Well, I should think you would (*to the Queen*).
She's beautiful!
I think she looks exactly like you, dear.

QUEEN.

Oh no, she looks exactly like the king—
Except the beard—of course. (*Tweaks his beard.*)

KING.

You flatter me.
(*Enter Page.*)

PAGE.

Oh great and glorious ruler of this realm,
Oh fair and beauteous queen of all the land,
Oh radiant Fairy of the Golden Isles—
The Fairy of the Crystal Mountains comes.

QUEEN.

We will receive her here at once.

QUEEN.

Yes—yes.

(Page bows and backs out.)

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

My dear, your baby simply is too sweet!

PAGE *(reenters)*.

The Fairy of the Crystal Mountains, sire.

(Page goes out as the Fairy of the Crystal Mountains enters, beautifully dressed, carrying the crystal globe of wisdom. She kneels in front of the King and Queen. They kiss her on the forehead.)

KING.

All welcome cousin, on this Christening day.
All welcome for our daughter and ourselves.

QUEEN.

Thou of the Crystal Mountains—welcome thrice.
Our hearts dance like the crystal mists that waft
About your mountain tops, to welcome you.

FAIRY OF THE CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS.

Mine dances too, like glad nymphs in the mists,
Dances and sings on this glad Christening day.

(Changing her manner, and getting up.)

Now let me see the baby, I can't wait!

(All look in cradle.)

Oh what a darling! Isn't she too, too dear!
She looks exactly like the King, I think.

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

I think she looks exactly like the Queen.

(Page enters.)

PAGE.

Oh great and glorious ruler of the realm,
Oh fair and beauteous queen of all this land,
Oh radiant Fairy of the Golden Isles,
Fair Fairy of the Crystal Mountains, lo
The Fairy of the Silver Rivers comes.

(The Fairy of the Silver Rivers enters immediately, beautifully dressed, bearing the mirror of beauty. She kneels before the King and Queen who kiss her on the forehead.)

KING.

All welcome cousin, on this Christening day.
All welcome for our daughter and ourselves.

QUEEN.

All welcome—Fairy of the Silver Streams.
Our hearts dance like glad ripples on thy waves
To see thee here.

FAIRY OF THE SILVER RIVERS.

Mine dances, too, like sunlight on the waves,
Dances and sings, on this glad Christening day.—
And I have brought a gift to give thy babe.

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

And so have I—

FAIRY OF THE CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS.

And I—

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

I thought I'd wait
Until the others came, so we could dance
Our magic gift dance as we give our gifts.

FAIRY OF THE SILVER RIVERS.

Why, that's a good idea—(*looks in cradle*).

How sweet she is!

I don't know which I think she looks like more.

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

Her mother.

FAIRY OF THE CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS.

No, her father.

FAIRY OF THE SILVER RIVERS.

Like you both.

My, she's the loveliest baby that I've seen.

QUEEN (*smiling*).

I'm glad you like her. But I'd like to know

Just where you got your dresses. Why, my dears,

They're wonderful! they're simply exquisite!

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

We got them for to-day—we think they're nice.

KING.

I hate to interrupt this pleasant chat.

But all our other guests will be here soon.

FAIRY OF THE CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS.

And we must dance our dance and give our gifts. (*Goes to cradle.*)

We'll have to pull it out a little way,

It's much too close against the wall to dance.

(*They pull the cradle to the center of the stage and begin a slow dance about it.*)*

FAIRY OF THE GOLDEN ISLES.

(*Holds ball high in air.*)

Lo—this golden glowing toy

Is the ball of mirth and joy,

*(See note 4 at end of play.)

As a Christening gift I leave thee.
Keep it, and no harm will grieve thee. (*She puts it in
the cradle and kisses the baby.*)

FAIRY OF THE CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS.

(*Holds up globe.*)

Lo, this crystal globe, before
Thy feet I lay. Deep wisdom's lore
Is hid therein—Long-bearded sages
Have sought this secret of the ages. (*She puts it in
the cradle and kisses the baby.*)

FAIRY OF THE SILVER RIVERS.

(*Holds up mirror.*)

The mirror of beauty I give to thee,
Thy face will greet thee happily,
The fairest face in all the land—

(*Enter Page, running breathlessly.*)

PAGE.

I crave thy pardon sire, but I fear!

KING.

What is the matter boy? What is all this?
What do you mean by interrupting us?

PAGE.

Another guest, a dreadful, cross, cross guest!
Her eyes are flashing—oh she's coming now.

(*All listen in consternation to angry sounds without. The fairies huddle together. The Queen edges close to the King. The Page, trembling, scuttles to one side of the dais.*)

QUEEN (*terrified*).

What can it be?

(*The Fairy of the Sable Caves rushes in the door like a whirlwind. All the others open their mouths*

*with astonishment and stand staring, in a semicircle.
She stands looking at them in derision.)*

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

Well, what's the matter? Are you all struck dumb?
I s'pose you don't remember who I am,
Or else perhaps you're overcome with joy
At seeing me. Oh close your foolish mouths.

(They close their mouths sheepishly.)

Well, since I've come, what have you got to say,
Now for yourselves?

KING *(with difficulty)*.

We're awfully sorry—it—

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES *(disagreeably)*.

Oh yes, of course, it was an oversight—
You "wouldn't *mean* to do it for the world"—

I know those old excuses all by heart.

It doesn't change the matter—not a bit.

You're giving a tremendous Christening,

And I, and I—you've simply "overlooked."

No, I was not invited—not a word!

Left out! the Fairy of the Sable Caves!

While these poor silly, frilly fairies here,

(She points to three Fairies who shudder and cling together.)

Are given posts of honor. Yes, that's right.

You're scared, I'm glad, no one can slight *me* twice.

You'll all be sorry, good and sorry, too.

Show me the baby.

QUEEN *(terrified)*.

There she is, in there.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

That ugly baby! looks just like you both.

(looking at the King's hand.)

What's that old rag around your finger for?

KING.

I pricked it, badly.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

Pricked it? Pricked it—humph!

QUEEN.

We're very sorry, it was all my fault.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

It doesn't matter now whose fault it was,
You should have thought of that before.

QUEEN.

Oh please!

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

Oh you will rue the day you slighted me—

(She faces the audience, waving her arms and weaving a spell)

Oh evil spirits of the blackest night!

Oh ghosts and goblins, ghouls and specters drear—

Oh wraiths who haunt dim starlit country roads—

Demons and trolls who dwell in dungeon moats—

Come near*—come near and weave a spell with me,

Come near and make a Christening present drear,

A Christening present for this sleeping child.

KING *(starting forward)*.

You shall not hurt my daughter! I forbid.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

Back, back, or I will turn you into stone. *(She compels him to step back.)*

Hark to the spell I lay upon this child:

For sixteen years these silly spells shall last—

(pointing to three fairies.)

* (See note 5. at end of play.)

She shall be happy, wise, and beautiful—
Dance in the sunlight—sing and laugh and play—
And then—and then—draw near, ye elves of doom,
Draw near ye spirits of my cave's deep gloom,
Upon a *distaff* sharp your child shall prick
Her finger, till it bleeds; and pale and sick
She'll grow—(*beckoning*) imps from my cobweb
tangled sky!

Pale, wan, and ill and then your child will—

(*She stands triumphant while the others cower in fear.*)

KING (*interrupting*).

No—oh no—not *that*—have mercy—oh—I pray!

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

Good-bye, I hope you'll have a pleasant day.

(*She laughs wildly and rushes out. The Queen flings herself sobbing upon the King. The others recover a bit.*)

FAIRY OF THE SILVER RIVERS.

(*Comes forward toward Queen.*)

Stop crying now, there's something I can do.

Her power equals mine and so I can't

Destroy her evil charms entirely.

But I can make them less, less, horrible.

Give me your hands. (*The three Fairies join hands over the cradle.*) Now close your eyes and wish.

Wish that the words I say will all come true.

The Princess shall not die, she shall not die,

But fall asleep instead, and sleep and sleep,

Sleep for a hundred years, until at last,

A prince shall break the spell by kissing her,

And she shall wake again to life and joy.

(*All drop hands and the tension is relaxed.*)

KING (*mopping face with handkerchief*).
Well, I can't tell you how obliged I am,
You're too—too kind—I—well—I simply can't.

QUEEN.
We have no words, we feel, far, far too much.
I don't believe in evil spells at all,
Only in good ones, never bad ones.
(*To King*) But I'll never have a distaff in this house.

KING.
We'll be on the safe side. Ho page—attend!
(*The Page hurriedly comes before him.*)

Proclaim to all my people in the land,
That from this time no distaff may be brought
Within my castle walls, on pain of death.
And he who disobeys me—dies at once.

PAGE.
I go—oh sire! (*He goes out.*)

QUEEN (*frantically to King*).
Oh, I simply can't
Go on and have the party after this.

KING.
You must, now pull yourself together, dear,
And make it a success; smile, grit your teeth!

QUEEN (*to Fairies*).
Don't look so sad my dears, it's over now,
We'll all forget it for the afternoon.

PAGE (*entering*).
Oh great and glorious rulers of this realm,
The Christening guests await thee, all without.

KING.
Then let us go to them. Come on, my dear.

QUEEN (*goes to cradle*).
We'll take the princess then. Come sweetums, come,

Come to your Christening, sweet. Come, everyone.

(The Page lifts up the cradle, as he does so the Queen turns to the Fairies.)

Forget that wicked charm, it musn't spoil
Our lovely Christening party, and besides,
All evil spells are nonsense; so my dears,
We'll simply *never* think of it again.

(The Page goes out bearing the cradle. The others follow in single file. Queen, King and Fairies.)

Curtain.

ACT II. (*Same as Act I. Sixteen years later.*)

(*The curtain rises upon the same room. The only change is that now a bench is in place of the cradle. The Princess, her Attendant, and the Courtier, who is the Page of the first act, grown up, are sitting on the dais steps. The Princess is in the middle. She is trying to play a mandolin, and is doing very badly. The Courtier is much bored. He and the Attendant have a little by-play behind the Princess' back, as she plays.*)

PRINCESS.

There now, that's right, I think, yes, yes, that's right.

COURTIER.

Well, even yet—I hardly think that it's—

ATTENDANT (*gently*).

I think you ought to strike the strings like this.

PRINCESS (*crossly*).

I think a princess ought to know the way.

COURTIER.

Oh yes, Your Highness owns the crystal globe
Of wisdom, and knows *everything* on earth.

PRINCESS.

Oh fiddlesticks!

COURTIER.

And as for beauty—why
The morning star is but a homely thing,
A common little stupid point of light,

(*He snaps his fingers as if at the morning star*)

Compared to you.— (*The Princess bends over her mandolin, much absorbed in it, and the Courtier immediately tries to hold the hand of the Attendant.*)

PRINCESS (*meaning his flattery*).

Oh stop such foolishness.

COURTIER (*quickly removing his hand*).
And as for joy, the bubbling mirth of spring,
The glamorous delight of golden hours,
The soft, sweet, soothing scent of summer showers,
The radiant happiness—

PRINCESS.
Oh what a fib—
You know yourself that I am just as cross
As I can be to-day. I wish I knew
What was the matter with me. Oh, I wish
It were to-morrow. I have always longed
To have that birthday come: my seventeenth!
I wonder if I'll feel much more grown up
Tomorrow. Well, at any rate I hope
I won't feel quite so cross— You wish it, too,
I guess, poor dears—I'm sorry. (*She suddenly makes
a most horrible noise on the mandolin.*)

COURTIER (*putting his hands over his ears*).
Please—oh please.

PRINCESS (*sternly*).
I think you're very rude. You ought to like
Whatever I may do. (*Considering*) I think perhaps
I'll have your head chopped off at once for that.

COURTIER (*on his knees*).
I humbly crave thy pardon, Highness, dear,
I pray thee, let me keep my head awhile—
At least a *little* longer. I have tried
So long to get this moustache, worked so hard,
I should be desolate if all that work
Were done in vain. And then, consider this—
My head would not be handsome on a pole.

PRINCESS.
I think you're much too vain. Get up at once.
(*He gets up, and the Princess attempts to play*

something on the mandolin. They listen attentively. She finishes and looks up for applause.)

What was I playing then? I love that piece.

COURTIER.

The death song of the Seven Kitchen Cats?

PRINCESS (*disgusted*).

No, no, it's not. I wouldn't speak at all
If every time I spoke I showed myself
As awfully stupid as you seem to be.

COURTIER.

We're not all gifted as your Highness is.

PRINCESS.

That's very clear. I s'pose it's not your fault
That you've been born without the slightest ear
For music. Now the name of that piece was,
"Beneath thy turret window, love, I wait."

COURTIER.

I crave thy pardon, Highness, my mistake.

PRINCESS.

Come on let's stop—I'm awfully sick of this.
This is the dulllest day I've ever known.
I wish it were tomorrow.

COURTIER (*feelingly*).

So do I.

(The Princess looks at him sternly and he hastily continues.)

Your birthday, Highness, is a festal day—
The Kingdom and its subjects all rejoice—
To think that you were born to fill the world
With radiance—

PRINCESS (*in a towering rage*).

Gadzooks! odds-bodkins! now, this is enough!

ATTENDANT (*in horror*).

Your Highness, oh such language!

PRINCESS.

Well, papa

Says just those words, don't interrupt me please.

He's simply making fun of me, I know.

I can't stand any more of this—Ho guards!

(*Courtier and Attendant throw themselves on floor.*)

ATTENDANT.

Pray pardon him, oh Princess—think—just think

He does, amuse us—

COURTIER.

Yes, and I might spoil

If I should languish in a dungeon dark.

PRINCESS.

Get up, get up—I'm acting like a pig!

A perfect pig, and you're just idiots.

I'm sure I hope the day will end without

My doing something simply horrible.

COURTIER (*ruefully*).

I'm sure *I* hope so, too.

PRINCESS.

Well, please look out.

I think I'll get my golden ball of joy—

We'll try to have a little fun with that.

ATTENDANT.

I'll get it for you.

COURTIER.

No, let me, let me.

PRINCESS.

Stay there and rest. You'd need it I should think.

(She runs out. The others sink down with relief on the dais steps.)

ATTENDANT.

Why, in the name of heaven, do you say
Such awful things?

COURTIER.

What awful things, dear heart?

ATTENDANT.

You know, all that about her radiance?
Of course it makes her simply furious.
I thought that you were done for twice at least.

COURTIER.

I was a little nervous there myself.
When they begin to talk that regal stuff
You never know where they, or you, will end.
Yes, that's the trouble with these kings and queens,
They get a little mad, perhaps, and then
They stick you in a dungeon, or perhaps
They cut your head off—just like this—

(Makes motion of cutting off head.)

Oh, well—

The whims of Kings and things are passing strange!

(He makes a nonchalant gesture.)

ATTENDANT.

But why, why do you say such silly things?

COURTIER.

A courtier's business is to flatter kings—
That's his excuse for being. Don't you know,
They teach the pages flattery in school.
Why, it's a course—I passed it very high.

ATTENDANT.

What nonsense!

COURTIER.

No, my dear—I'll tell you why
I say such things. I mean them all for you.
I say them to the Princess with my lips
Because that's proper etiquette—but oh
My heart is singing them aloud to you.*

(He tries to kiss her—the Princess enters but does not see them.)

PRINCESS.

Come on now, here it is, let's have a game.

(They throw the ball.)

ATTENDANT.

Perhaps we'd better all go out and play,
We might break something here, I think.

PRINCESS.

No—no—

The sun's too hot—my head aches—no, I won't.
Besides it's much more fun to play in here.
Much more exciting, just because we might
Knock something over. My I'd like a crash—
A good loud crashing smash.

(To Courtier) You throw too high,
It isn't fair. *(He throws the ball off stage.)*
There now, see what you've done!

(All follow ball toward door. The Princess scrambles to catch it.)

ATTENDANT.

Oh, where's it gone?

(The Princess disappears out of the door and calls back.)

PRINCESS *(outside)*.

It slipped out of my hands,

* (See note 6. at end of play.)

It's dropped down in the courtyard,—hurry, do,
It's rolling toward the fountain, stop it, quick.

(The Courtier rushes out, and the Princess comes back and throws herself down on the divan.)

Now, isn't that a nuisance! What a day!
Just everything's gone wrong, oh, what a bore!
The ball will probably stop up the drain,
And then papa will be so awfully cross.

ATTENDANT.

Perhaps it would amuse you if I brought
The magic mirror of your beauty.

PRINCESS.

No—of course I know I'm very beautiful,
So what's the use of looking in the glass?

ATTENDANT.

I'm sure that it would never bore me so.

PRINCESS *(with unintentional unkindness)*.
Perhaps not you. Oh well, then bring it on.
Why can't we change our faces like our clothes.
You get so tired of the same old face.

(Attendant hands her the mirror. The Princess gives a sudden scream.)

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, do I look like that?

ATTENDANT.

Like what—like what?

PRINCESS.

All queer and lumpy—oh—
What can have happened—oh how horrible—
I'm sure that I don't look like that—oh no!!

ATTENDANT *(frightened, looking first at Princess then at mirror)*.

You don't, you don't—the mirror's just gone bad,
The glass is sort of curdled.

PRINCESS.

So it is.

Like sour milk, how dreadful, take it, quick!
I never knew that glass could act like this—
It makes me feel quite seasick. Let's go out.

ATTENDANT.

Perhaps you'd best lie down a little while
And take some wine, some of your father's—do—
I'll call your mother—

PRINCESS (*grabbing her*).

Stop it—no, you won't.
She'd tell Papa—I wouldn't have him know
For anything. He'd be so awfully cross
If anything has happened to that glass.
He's always told me I must take such care
Of it—and of my ball and of the globe.
I s'pose I haven't kept it clean enough—
Or something. Hide it underneath the throne—

(*She does so.*)

Perhaps a cool dark place will make it right.
Come on—let's go and help fish out the ball—
I think the Courtier must have fallen in
The fountain, he's been such a length of time.

(*Exit both. Enter King and Queen. Queen carries a chess board.*)

KING.

Well, now, my dear, she's almost seventeen,
And nothing's happened yet. I think she's safe.
To-morrow is her birthday. I'd forget
That foolish prophesy if I were you.

QUEEN (*Sits down on chest*).

Well, you're a man. Of course you'd talk like that.

KING.

It isn't likely now that such a thing
Could happen, dear. I think it was a bluff
To scare us all—and it's so long ago—
I'm sure Aunt Fairy of the Sable Caves,
Has just forgotten all about the child.

QUEEN.

Oh well—of course, you men have just no nerves.
I shan't feel safe until to-morrow's come.

KING.

Why, if it were to happen, seems to me,
It would have happened long ago, my dear.

QUEEN.

Well, this has been a simply ghastly year,
I've hardly dared to let her from my sight,
For fear that frightful spell would just swoop down.

KING.

It surely has, my dear—and I'll be glad—
More glad than I can say to have it end
Tomorrow—there's no reason is there dear
Why you're particularly worried now?
Has anything gone wrong?

QUEEN.

No, not at all.
Except the child seems very cross to-day—
And that's not natural at all you know.

KING.

Oh well, perhaps she feels us worrying.
Her magic charms are perfectly all right
I hope.

QUEEN.

Oh yes—she had them all last night—quite safe.
The ball and globe and mirror.

KING.

Well, then, come on, let's have a game of chess.

(They go up to divan, sit down, and begin to play.)

I hear our next door kingdom's much distressed
And ravaged by a dragon that's appeared.

QUEEN.

No—you don't say? Now isn't that a shame!
I hope the nasty thing won't come to ours.

KING *(about the chess)*.

I've almost caught your queen now.

QUEEN *(listening)*.

Here she comes.

(Enter Princess with Courtier and Attendant. The two latter bow formally to King and Queen, then stand at attention at either corner of the dais. The Princess sits down on the divan beside the King, rubs her face against his, and puts one arm around his neck. He squirms.)

KING.

Well pet—where have you been? Excuse me, dear—
You know, I love your arm about my neck—
But really now—it's just a little damp.
What can you have been doing with it, dear?

QUEEN *(worried)*.

What, is it very wet? You may catch cold!

PRINCESS *(bored)*.

Oh no, I won't catch cold—it's nothing—please—
Papa, it's really hardly wet at all.

QUEEN.

How did you get your arm wet? It's very odd.

PRINCESS.

Well, we've been dabbling in the fountain there,
And so my sleeve slipped in a bit—that's all.

KING.

She probably was sailing little boats.

PRINCESS (*irritated*).

I'm not a child, Papa. Tomorrow I'll
Be seventeen, please do remember that.

QUEEN.

Why were you playing in the fountain, dear?
You haven't told us yet.

PRINCESS.

Oh, just because
Something of mine dropped in it. That was all.

KING.

And did you get it out again, my dear?

PRINCESS.

I didn't, no. I think the yellow frog
Has swallowed it. It wasn't anything
Especially important anyway.

(*Courtier and Attendant exchange glances.*)

Now please don't talk about it any more.
I wish that something nice would happen. Oh
It's been a horrid day, just everything's
Gone wrong, and I feel simply bored to death.

KING (*alarmed*).

Well, let's do something then to cheer you up.

PRINCESS.

There's not a thing to do—there never is.

QUEEN.

Let's talk about your birthday presents then.

PRINCESS.

Oh, no, that's such a bore. Tomorrow seems
As though it were a hundred years away.

(The King and Queen start in consternation and horror and turn pale if possible.)

QUEEN *(gasping)*.
Oh don't child; don't—

KING *(sternly)*.
Child, why did you say that?

PRINCESS *(yawning)*.
Oh, I don't know I'm sure—why such a fuss?
(Languidly) Come on let's get my crystal globe and see
If there is anything at all in that
That is amusing. Courtier—get it, please.

(He bows and goes out of the room.)

QUEEN.
Oh, do you think it wise, today I mean.

PRINCESS.
I'm sure I can't see why it isn't wise,
To look into my globe of wisdom now,
Or any other time.

QUEEN *(reluctantly)*.
Well, as you wish.

(Courtier enters with it, bows and places it on the dais in front of the Royal Group.)

KING.
What shall we look for dear? You'd better choose.

PRINCESS *(kneeling in front of King and Queen and looking in globe)*.
I know what would be fun—let's look ahead
And see the future. Take tomorrow first.
Show us tomorrow globe—now all look hard.

(All are silent a minute gazing in globe.)

PRINCESS.
Show us tomorrow—quick you stupid thing—

It's awfully queer and cloudy—sort of black—
I never saw it act that way before.

QUEEN (*nervously*).

Oh, why do you suppose it's acting so?

KING (*with common sense*).

We simply are not in the proper mood,
No other reason.

PRINCESS.

No, it isn't that.

It's always clear, with pictures that are bright.
The future's stupid anyway. Let's look
At something in the past—my Christening—

QUEEN (*agonized*).

Oh no, not that today, not that today.

PRINCESS (*as a spoiled child*).

Oh fiddlesticks, why not. Ah here it is.
Yes, yes, here's this same room—now this is clear—
Oh there you are, Papa, and there's Mamma—
How funnily you're dressed—the styles have changed
Since then Mamma. Oh who are these—these three
Quite lovely people?

QUEEN (*in a stifled voice*).

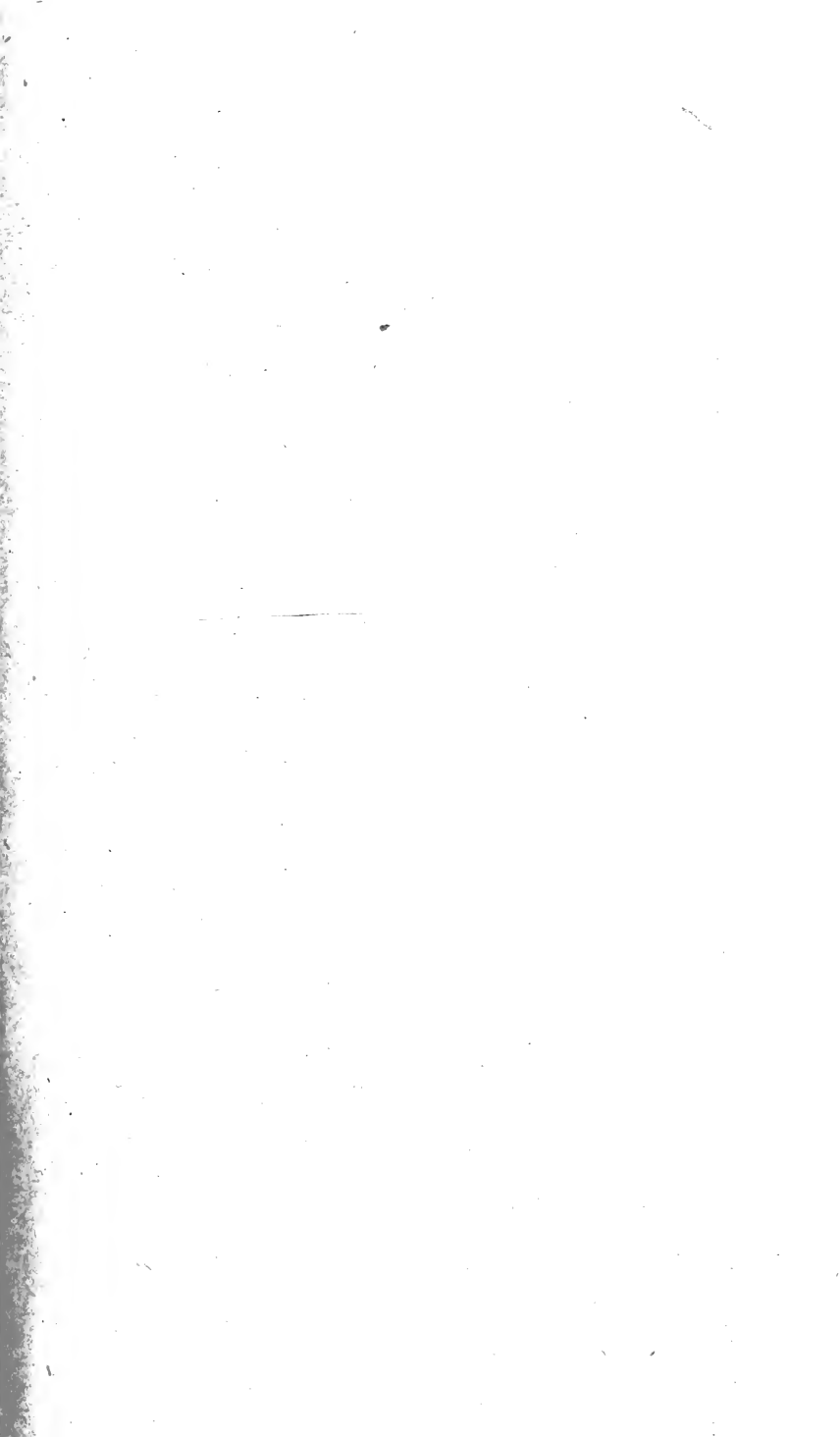
They're the fairies, dear,
Who gave you your three lovely gifts you know.
Now, that's enough my dear—let's put it up.

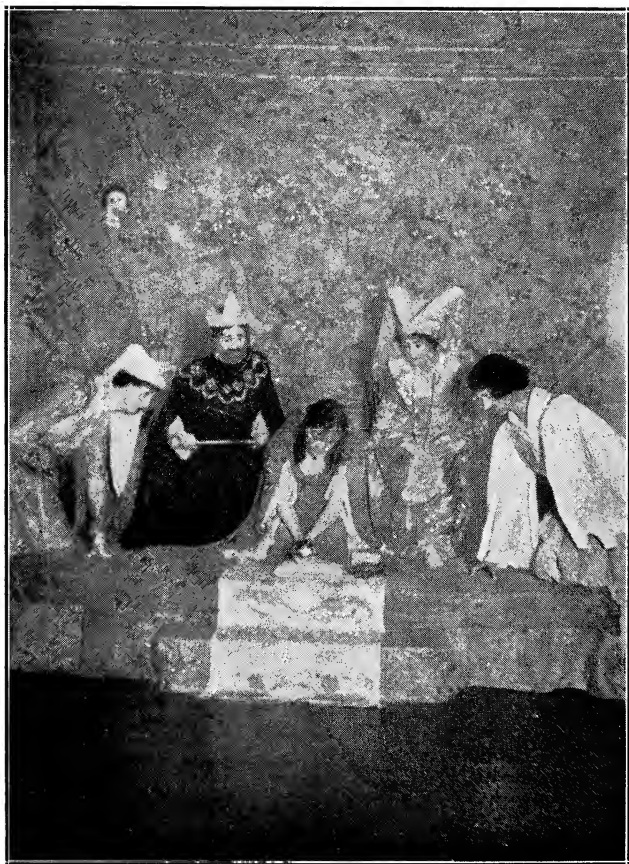
PRINCESS.

No, no, I won't. I want to see the rest.
Why who'se this coming in? A queer black thing,
She's awfully angry, and you look so scared.
And see—the words she says are written out—
“Hark to the spell I lay”—

KING.

Odds-bodkins! zounds!





"LET'S LOOK AHEAD AND SEE THE FUTURE"

(He raises his scepter and smashes the crystal globe. The Queen and Princess rise in horror and amazement.)

PRINCESS.

Papa—papa—how could you—oh papa!
You've broken it—my precious crystal globe.
How *could* you—and you've spoiled the picture, too!
I think it's just too bad *(she sobs)*.

KING *(dominating the scene)*.

My child, no more—
I am the king, no one may question me!
My power comes from heaven, that you know
As well as I. And if I choose to break
The crystal globes of all my subjects—then
Break them I will and none may question why—
Aye, if I choose, to go throughout the land
Into each kitchen of each home therein,
And with my scepter, sweep from off the shelves,
The crockery, and smash it on the floor—
And dance upon the fragments, even then
No one may question me, but must submit,
And with a gracious spirit, being glad
They have a king so wise and lenient.
Now take this little lesson to thy heart.

PRINCESS *(quite humbly, kneeling)*.

Father, I will—thy word, of course, is law—
And I would not presume to question thee.
I crave thy pardon sire.

(To Courtier and Attendant) Come along *(She jumps to her feet)* Let's go up to the tower room and see
If any swallows' eggs have hatched to-day.

(The King mops his brow. As Princess, Attendant and Courtier are about to go out, the Queen sees

something sticking out from under the throne. She takes it out and sees the magic mirror, spoiled.)

QUEEN (*in horror*).

My dear, your magic mirror—why, it's spoiled!

PRINCESS (*pretending unconcern*).

I know, I found it out this afternoon

Just after I had lost my ball of joy

Down in the fountain—Isn't it a shame.

(She rushes out with Attendant and Courtier anxious to escape. The King and Queen look at each other in horror.)

QUEEN (*in a whisper*).

The fairies' charms are ruined—

KING (*in despair*).

And what next?

Curtain.

ACT II. SCENE 2.

(The Attic near the tower room; a dim mysterious place; the fairy of the Sable Caves, disguised in a cap and apron, is spinning in one corner as the curtain rises.)

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES (*chanting*).

Wind, wind, wind; the weary years roll by,
Wind, wind, wind; the time is drawing nigh,
Wind, wind, wind; the lagging moments creep.
Wind, wind, wind; the Princess soon shall sleep.

(She stops and listens a moment, and hears the Princess' voice outside.)

PRINCESS (*outside*).

No, not a single swallow's egg has hatched.
Oh—feel the wind blow on your face and see
The clouds race by.

COURTIER (*outside*).

Look down and see the knights.

PRINCESS (*outside*).

They look like tiny ants—we *are* high up.
Come, let's go down. Oh what's that funny door?

COURTIER.

What door?

PRINCESS.

That little one, hid in the wall,
I've never seen it there in all my life.
I wonder where it leads to,—let's explore.

COURTIER.

Oh, no, let's not, let's go down where it's warm.
That probably leads in beneath the roofs—
Into the palace attics. Don't go in,
There's nothing there but dark and dust and bats.

PRINCESS (*outside*).

Ohee—that sounds exciting—come along.

ATTENDANT (*outside*).

Oh don't let's, Princess dear. It's awfully dark.

PRINCESS (*outside*).

Oh fiddlesticks—come on.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES (*muttering to herself*).

Come on—come on.

(The Princess steps in slowly, and wonderingly, the others following. They do not at first notice the Fairy of the Sable Caves who pays no attention to them but goes on spinning and winding her distaff in the corner.)

PRINCESS (*almost whispering*).

My what a queer old place!

ATTENDANT.

Ouch—there's a bat!

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES (*chanting*).

Wind, wind, wind, the weary years roll by.

PRINCESS.

Shhh—shhh—what's that? Some one is singing—

Hush.

ATTENDANT.

Come, let's go down—

PRINCESS.

No, let's see who it is.

(She steals up nearer to the Fairy of the Sable Caves.)

Good-day, old mother, may I watch thy work?

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

(Not paying any attention.)

Wind, wind, wind; the time is drawing nigh.

(then suddenly starting and looking at her.)

Hey—what you say? I'm getting deaf, my dear?

PRINCESS.

I asked if I might watch you at your work?
It's fascinating. I have never seen
Such work before.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

What's that you say? I'm deaf.
Come nearer, please.

PRINCESS (*shouting*).

Your work; I like your work!

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES.

(*As though she misunderstood.*)

No, no, there isn't any bats up here.

PRINCESS (*shouting*).

Not bats, not bats—your work—I like your work.
Please tell me how you do it—it's so strange.

FAIRY OF THE SABLE CAVES (*agreeably*).

Well, first you take it in your hand like this.

COURTIER (*to Attendant*).

What's that?

ATTENDANT.

A distaff; why?

COURTIER.

Good heavens, no!!

The King's command—Don't touch it Princess, don't.

FAIRY.

Just take it in your hand like this and wind.

COURTIER (*pulling Princess away*).

Don't touch it!

PRINCESS (*enraged*).

Sir, how dare you!

COURTIER.

Princess, don't, upon your life, your father—

PRINCESS (*imitating her father's manner*).
Silence, sir—

I am the Princess, would you question me?
My power came from heaven, and I touch
Whatever I may please; no matter what

(*Changes suddenly to the manner of a child.*)

My father says. So there!

COURTIER.

You'll not touch this.

PRINCESS.

Report unto the executioner at once.
Such insolence!!

COURTIER.

It matters not, I care not if I die,
But you shall not!

(*He starts forward to prevent her taking the distaff.*)

FAIRY (*to Courtier*).

Back, back, or I will turn you into stone—
Your arm is stone; you cannot move or speak.

(*Courtier stands motionless with arm upraised*).

(*To Princess.*)

Now take it in your hand and wind, and wind,
Wind, wind, wind, the lagging moments creep—

PRINCESS.

What fun, what jolly fun, this little thing
Must be quite new. I'd like to show mamma!

FAIRY.

Do take it down and show mamma,
And give your parents a surprise; a *nice* surprise.

PRINCESS.

Oh thanks a thousand times. (*looking at Courtier*)

Please let him come.

I think he's sorry now.

FAIRY.

He'll be down soon,

Go on, my dear, go down.

PRINCESS.

Oh thank you, thanks. (*exit, pulling the reluctant Attendant*).

FAIRY.

Wind, wind, wind, the Princess soon shall sleep.

Curtain.

ACT II. SCENE 3. Same as Scene 1.

(*The King is walking nervously up and down the room. The Queen is sitting on the bench, sewing on an embroidery frame.*)

KING (*pulling his moustache*).

I wish to goodness she'd come back. Dear me,
I've never known as long a day as this.

QUEEN.

Let's try to think of something else. Let's talk
Of something pleasant. Do you think, my dear,
That dragon in the kingdom next to ours
Will cross the border into this?

KING.

I don't.

That new thorn hedge I've just had planted there
Will keep all dragons out—it's dragon proof.

QUEEN (*gets up and walks to King*).

It's awfully low.

KING.

Yes, but it's awfully sharp.

QUEEN.

Oh see, it's growing dusk!

KING.

Why, so it is,

The day is almost over.

QUEEN.

And she's safe—

Yes, almost safe, I think.

(The Princess dashes in behind the King. The Attendant follows.)

PRINCESS *(in the King's ear)*.

Booo!

KING *(jumping and turning around)*.

Oh, my child,

Odds-bodkins how you frightened me. Dear me

My heart is going pit-a-pat with fear.

PRINCESS.

Oh you old timid thing to be a king.

Papa, mamma, what do you think I've found!

QUEEN.

(Interested and relieved now that the Princess has returned in such good spirits.)

I can't imagine dear—what have you found?

PRINCESS.

I've got it here behind my back. Just guess.

It's something awfully interesting and strange.

Now, guess papa—just guess what it can be.

KING *(indulgently)*.

Well, now—let's see—a phoenix egg, perhaps,
Dropped in the tower.

PRINCESS.

No! Mamma you guess.

QUEEN.

A snow-white kitten with a golden tongue.

PRINCESS.

No—no—what foolish guesses! Now papa.

KING.

A talking gold finch—or a magic purse.

PRINCESS.

No, no, it's none of these; now watch me, see—

(She jumps up to the throne, stands before them and displays the distaff proudly.)

It's quite the strangest thing I've ever seen.

(All stand petrified with horror—a deep sigh escapes from the King and Queen.)

KING-QUEEN.

A distaff!

QUEEN.

Oh my child; my little girl!

PRINCESS (*gaily*).

Why do you look so scared? It works like this.

(The King makes a sudden leap to snatch it from her hand. As he does so, it scratches her.)

Don't, don't, Papa—ouch, ouch, I've scratched my hand.

QUEEN.

Oh no—oh no!

KING (*as if frozen*).

She has my dear—she has.

Here bind it quickly. No this is the spell!

Alas, the spell.

PRINCESS.

Good gracious what a fuss.
It's just a little tiny scratch; that's all—
Why bother so? (*She sits down on divan*).
Dear me, I seem to be (*She yawns*).
Most awfully sleepy, and mamma you look
About to drop right off (*She stretches out*).
I think I'll take
A little nap. Sweet dreams (*She dozes off*).

KING (*kissing her and arranging her dress comfortably*).

Sweet dreams, my dear—

(*He yawns—the Queen and Attendants yawn.*)

QUEEN (*nodding*).

And I feel sleepy, too—I think that I—

(*She drops off to sleep.*)

KING (*yawning*).

Attendant, go prepare the Princess' bed.

I think perhaps she'll sleep for rather long (*shivers*).

(*Courtier is heard calling from outside, then he dashes in.*)

COURTIER.

Take it away from her my lord—She has
A distaff—Oh, I tried—A frightful spell
Held me—oh—oh, I'm not too late,—I'm not
Too late—I tried,—I tried,—but failed.—

(*He sinks down upon the floor, asleep, with his head in the lap of the Princess's Attendant.*)

Curtain.

ACT III. SCENE 1.

(Outside the thorn hedge that separates the palace of the Sleeping Beauty from the world. A horn is heard off stage. Presently the Prince enters with horn and spear. He stands in front of the hedge and blows again, then calls.)

PRINCE.

Haloo—haloo.

ANSWER *(faintly)*.

Haloo.

PRINCE.

Come on this way,
I've found a little clearing—come along.

(Crackling outside and Gentleman in Waiting appears.)

GENTLEMAN.

Zounds, but I'm all scratched up—these beastly thorns
Are just like lion's claws. Where are we now?

PRINCE *(shrugging his shoulders)*.

Oh don't ask me—I'm perfectly at sea—

GENTLEMAN.

It seems to me we're more like in the woods.

PRINCE *(laughing)*.

Ha—ha—you're right—come on old boy, cheer up.

GENTLEMAN *(grumpily)*.

Humph—what's the use, we're lost—we've got to
starve.

We've followed this old claw thorn hedge all day,
The forest is as thick as banks of spears,
Solid—it is—our falcon's blown away—
We didn't get the stag we chased—gadzooks
My arm's like ribbons on a maying pole.

PRINCE.

Oh well, cheer up, at least we're still alive.

GENTLEMAN.

That's just the trouble. If I weren't alive
I wouldn't know how beastly starved I am.

PRINCE (*Sitting down comfortably with his back to
the hedge*).

I guess we'll last a little longer.

GENTLEMAN.

Humph!

PRINCE (*feeling in his pouch*).

Look here, look here, I've got a bit of bread,
I brought it out to feed the falcon with.
Here take it if your hungry. (*He tosses it to attendant*)

GENTLEMAN (*glumly*).

No, sire, no—

PRINCE (*Breaking it and taking much the smaller
piece*).

We'll share it then. (*He feels again in his pouch.*)
Why, here's a piece of cheese!

GENTLEMAN (*Starting to put it in his mouth*).

Good—good.

PRINCE.

Oh, no, it's just a candle's end.

GENTLEMAN.

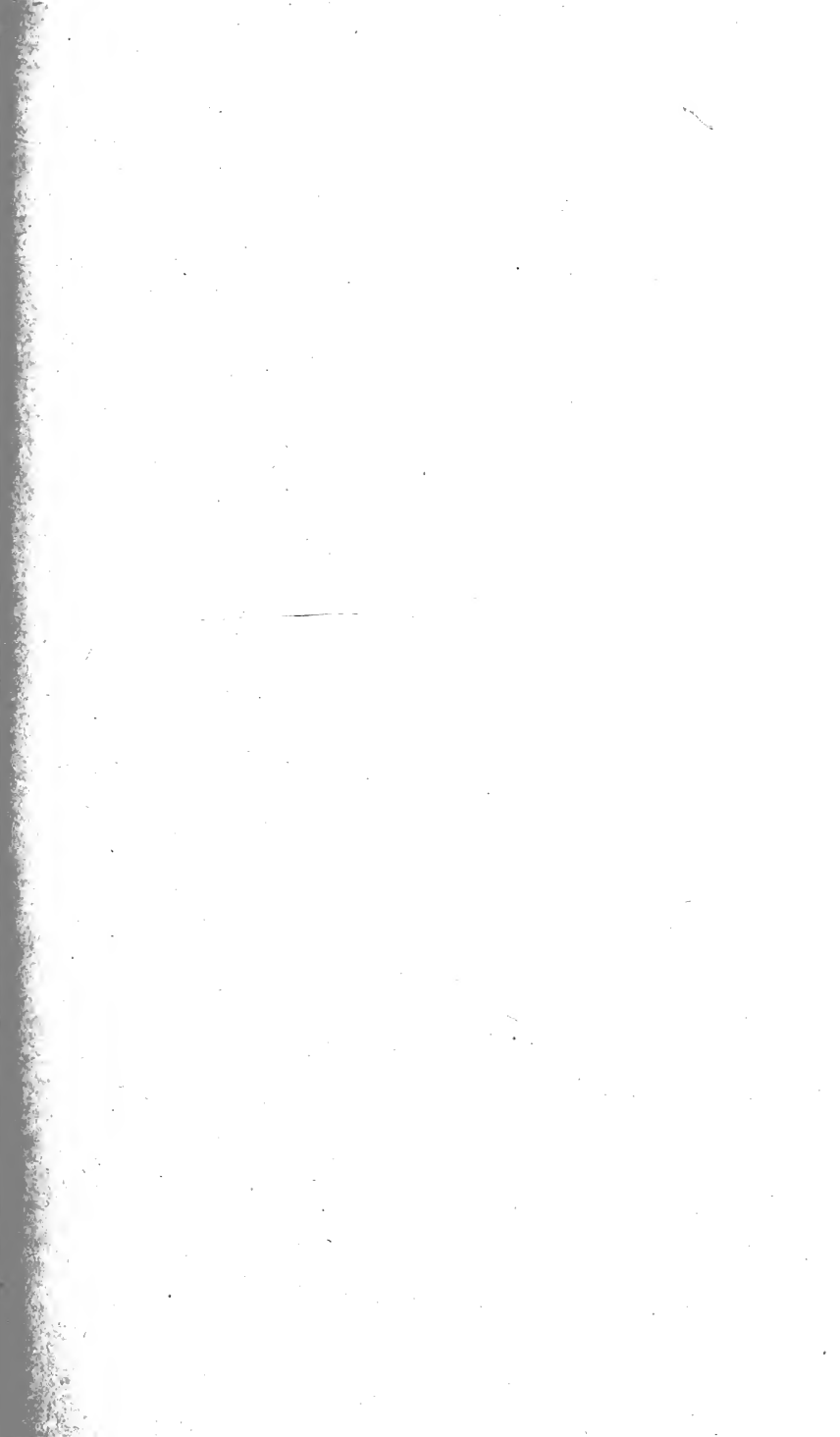
Ugh! I was just about to eat it—bah!

PRINCE.

Here save it—we may have to eat it yet.

GENTLEMAN.

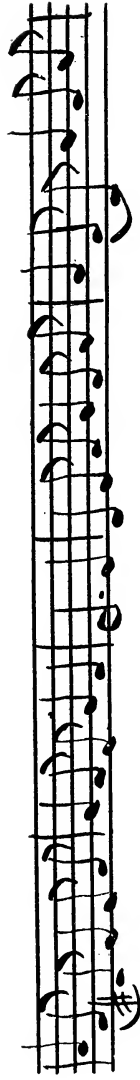
The bread is awfully dry—I wish I had
A good meat pastry now—



THE PRINCE'S SONG.

FFANCHER-

Maestoso -



PRINCE.

With brown old ale!

(Singing lustily.)

Oh give me the good meat pies of old;

Oh give me the foaming ale,

And the flaming logs when the day grows cold

And at dusk the minstrel's tale—

Oh give me a sword with a straight blue blade,

And the tourney's clash and din—

And a merrie heart and unafraid,

And a princess fair to win!

Oh give—

GENTLEMAN *(nervously)*.

My lord, pray do you think it wise—

To sing—well, quite so loudly?

PRINCE.

Well, why not?

Think I'll disturb the birds—or do you think

I'll make them jealous? *(Stands up, takes off his hat
and bows.)* Birds, I humbly crave thy pardons.

GENTLEMAN *(rising)*.

No, my Lord—I only thought

That since we don't know what is hidden there—

Your voice perhaps—

PRINCE.

Yes, I'll admit my voice

May startle even dragons into rage.

GENTLEMAN *(in fear)*.

Oh, no, don't say you think there's dragons there.

(Pointing behind hedge.)

PRINCE.

I shouldn't be surprised—big scaly ones.

GENTLEMAN (*Putting an eye fearsomely to hedge*).
I don't see any; oh let's go away.
I wouldn't want to meet a dragon—sire.

PRINCE.
You're safe enough I think—the hedge seems high
And sharp enough to keep all dragons out.

(*then seeing that the Gentleman is truly terrified.*)
Why I was only fooling you, old boy.
The only dragons live in minstrels' tales—
There's not one left alive these days. But still
There's *something* queer about these woods.

ATTENDANT.
I know.
Too queer for me!

PRINCE.
Why all day long I've thought
Of those old minstrels' tales I used to love
When I was just a little lad, and sat
Before the great log fire, listening,
So thrilled and frightened that I hardly breathed.

ATTENDANT.
I always went to sleep when minstrels came (*sitting
down*).

PRINCE.
And there was one tale that they used to tell
About this very forest, so they say,
That there was once a castle here, and all
The people in it were asleep: the King
And Queen, and even all the mice and rats
Were sleeping. And there was a Princess, too,
So beautiful she made your heart stand still.
I used to dream about her on those nights,

And wake and look across our battlements,
And vow I'd marry her when I grew up.
But those were minstrels' tales—(*He sighs*),
Come on, wake up—

(*He shakes Gentleman's shoulder.*)

I swear I'll find a way inside the hedge.

GENTLEMAN.

Oh don't—oh don't, I'm sure it isn't safe.

PRINCE (*nobly*).

Seek safety when we're old, but while we're young
We'll seek adventure with courageous hearts!

GENTLEMAN (*sighing*).

All right my lord, you're right—As usual.
But still I think that we were fools to come
And hunt here in these woods when everyone
Said it was dangerous.

PRINCE.

Old women's talk!

(*He searches up and down hedge.*)

I wonder what's behind it. Oh look here!

I see an opening I think—yes—yes—(*He crawls half
through hedge, his feet sticking back*).

It's tiny—I can make it bigger though.

GENTLEMAN.

You're fooling me again.

PRINCE.

I'm not I swear—(*He works at making hole bigger*).

GENTLEMAN.

Well, I believe you—for you never lie.

PRINCE.

Haloo—I'm through. Well, by my halidome!

GENTLEMAN.

What do you see?

PRINCE.

Well by my halidome!

GENTLEMAN (*terrified*).

What is it? Are you hurt my lord?

Come out (*he tries to pull the Prince back by his legs*).

PRINCE.

Good heavens, no—let go you idiot

You'll pull my legs off—hi—let go I say.

(*Gentleman lets go—the Prince disappears and speaks from outside.*)

GENTLEMAN.

A dragon's got you! Oh, my lord—my lord.

PRINCE.

No, no, there's not a sign of one—but oh

Come through, come quick, oh, oh, how wonderful:

A palace, gray and old, and everything

All grown around it, thick rank vines and trees—

And crumbling turrets, and a drawbridge, too,

All tumbling in, and there's a green old moat.

Come, let's explore the castle, hurry through.

(*The Gentleman in Waiting fearsomely scrambles through.*)

Curtain.

ACT III. SCENE 2.

Same as Act II. Scene 3.

(The tableau is the same, except that great cobwebs are about. The King, Queen, Princess, and attendants are all sleeping quietly. It is growing dusk. A thin thread of light comes in the door. The Prince enters, carrying his candle. He comes slowly and quietly and looks about in wonder. At first he does not see the Princess who is in deep shadow. The Gentleman in Waiting follows him in fear.)

PRINCE.

Shhh—hush, go softly—

GENTLEMAN.

Are they dead, my lord?

PRINCE.

Asleep, I think. They're breathing easily.

(Flashes his light on Man at Arms in doorway.)

Look there, a spider's web about his spear.

GENTLEMAN *(in scorn)*.

Some soldier that! bound by a spider's web.

PRINCE.

Asleep—the whole whole palace is asleep.

GENTLEMAN.

The roof is crumbling in up there, my lord.

PRINCE.

And see, a vine has grown between the stones.

(Dreamily.)

The dust is inches thick upon the floor—

How easily they breathe! How strange—how strange.

Is all this real—or am I in a dream?

I've stepped into some minstrel's tale myself.

And all this glamour of enchantment deep,

The mystery, and silence, and the ache
Of wonder in my heart,—and I myself—
Are all just brilliant, colored words and thoughts,
Told for a moment on a winter's night,
Told and forgotten e're the fire dies.

GENTLEMAN (*touching him*).
See, there's a fly asleep upon the wall.

PRINCE (*jumping*).
There are no flies in dreams, so this is real—

GENTLEMAN.
It's real enough, my lord—come on, let's go.
My spine feels just like icicles—come on.

PRINCE.
They've slept a long, long time, I think. Those clothes
Are like the ones they wore long, long ago—
I wonder if they've dreamed and what they've dreamed.
Yes, they've slept long enough.
(*He calls*) Wake up—wake up!

(*Silence.*)

GENTLEMAN.
Oh come, come home, this is a dreadful place.

PRINCE (*calling again*).
Hi there—haloo—wake up (*He shakes the Courtier*).

GENTLEMAN.
They're in a spell—
This place is haunted—come away my lord.

PRINCE.
I follow this adventure to the end—

GENTLEMAN.
I didn't like those rows of men at arms
All sleeping in their armor in the halls,

Nor all the sleeping servants that we passed—
It's dangerous I tell you—come away—

PRINCE.

Not yet, not yet, the old tales said there was
A princess.

GENTLEMAN (*looking at King*).

Well, here's someone in a crown.

PRINCE.

Ah—there's the king, the princess must be near.

GENTLEMAN (*disgusted*).

His crown's all crooked.

PRINCE (*rebuking him*).

Still—he is a king (*He bows to the sleeping King as he passes him*). —

(*The Gentleman in Waiting stops before the Princess' Attendant in admiration. The Prince steps up on the dais, and holds his candle so that the light, but not the grease, falls upon her face. He stands silent a moment, gasps in wonder, then takes off his plumed hat reverently.*)

Oh wondrous one, the olden tales were true—
Thy beauty, oh, thy beauty floods my soul
With golden visions of eternal joy.
Here let me kneel and worship at thy shrine.

(*He kneels and kisses her—a long kiss. She slowly opens her eyes and gazes at him. The others begin to awaken slowly.*)

PRINCESS (*smiling at him dreamily*).

Do it again.

PRINCE (*kissing her hand*).

Beloved.

PRINCESS.

Who are you?

PRINCE.

I am thy prince.

PRINCESS (*half sitting up*).

My prince, my very own?

How glorious! I've dreamed that you would come—

PRINCE.

And I of you beloved—

PRINCESS.

But my dreams

Weren't half as wonderful as you—not half!

(Gradually the people awaken. The Queen sneezes loudly and suddenly, and all but the Prince and Princess rise.)

QUEEN.

Kechew—kechew—what simply frightful dust!

Why there's a cobweb in your crown—get out!

You nasty thing (*brushes off King's crown*).

KING (*stretching*).

I think I've had a nap. How dark it is!

Open the casement, Courtier (*The light grows brighter as Courtier obeys*). I declare!

QUEEN.

Who are those strange young men I'd like to know!

(The Prince's Gentleman has been trying to kiss the Princess' Attendant.)

ATTENDANT.

The brute! He tried to kiss me!

COURTIER (*to gentleman*).

Here, get out! (*A scuffle ensues.*)

KING.

Come, stop this most disgraceful row at once.

(*To Prince*) And who in thunder, sir, are you? And what,
What have you done?!!!

PRINCE.
I've kissed your daughter, sire (*All are horrified*).

KING.
And you admit it to my face! What, ho
My guards! You will repent this insult gross
At leisure in my deepest dungeon dark!

PRINCE.
Do with me as you will, I'll gladly spend
My life in any dungeon that you choose,
To pay for that one kiss. The price is small.

QUEEN.
It's surely very rude; I'm quite surprised.

KING.
Rude, rude!! Well, I should say! Perhaps you think
Because I just dropped off for forty winks,
That I'm so old and lazy that I can't
Protect my daughter from such men as you.

PRINCESS.
Papa, papa, oh please don't be so cross.

KING.
Please tell me how you two got through the hall.
What were my men all doing to allow
Intruders here? That's what I'd like to know.

PRINCE.
They were all sleeping, sir, as we came past.

QUEEN.
Were they all sleeping, too? How very odd!
I think we must have eaten something queer
For lunch that made us all drop off to sleep.

Perhaps it was those canned pomgranate seeds.

KING.

What nonsense—to the dungeon, sir, you go.

PRINCESS.

Then I go too. I like him very much. (*She takes his hand proudly and steps toward the front of the dais. As she does so she kicks the distaff and it rolls into view.*)

QUEEN.

Oh there's that horrid distaff—throw it out.
I'm so afraid you'll prick your finger, dear.

PRINCESS.

Why, so I did before I went to sleep—

KING.

Before we went to sleep—How long—how long, have
we been sleeping?

PRINCE.

Oh, a hundred years or so, I think.

ALL.

It can't be true!

KING.

The spell has passed, and we're awake again!
Young sir, pray pardon me. I did not know,
I could not guess—it *seemed* just like a nap.

PRINCESS.

Besides he's always cross when first he wakes,
But usually he is a perfect dear.

PRINCE (*bowing*).

He is a perfect father anyway,
I should have done as he did had you been
My daughter, oh beloved. But I'm glad
You're not.

KING.

Young sir, we owe our life to you.
Now that my rage has passed I see you are
Of noble birth—undoubtedly a prince.

Ask of me what you will, and it is yours.
For you have freed us from this dreadful spell,
And roused us from our hundred years of sleep.

PRINCE (*kneeling*).

I know I am unworthy, but I crave
Your daughter's hand in marriage.

PRINCESS (*kneeling*).

Father, please—
I do, do like him!

QUEEN (*softly*).

Dear, he seems to be
A very fine young man.

KING.

I'm sure he is.
Rise son, I give my daughter unto you,
And half my kingdom shall be yours as well—*

QUEEN.

Come down into the banquet hall!!

PRINCE.

And dance
The dead dust of a hundred years away.

*(All exit joyously. The Prince and Princess lead.
The King and Queen follow. Then come the Courtier
and the Princess's Attendant, and the others.)*

Curtain.

*(See note 7.)

THE ADDITION OF PAGEANTRY.

Note 1. The Sleeping Beauty is a story especially suitable for Spring presentation, since for many centuries and by many races its meaning has been symbolic of the reawakening of nature. Winter, personified by the Wicked Fairy, lays a spell upon Nature, causing her to fall into a deep sleep. This may be dispelled only by the kiss of Spring, the Prince of the fairy tale.

Note 2. The play as it stands may easily be expanded into a pageant by the addition of more characters, and the interpolation of dances.

The extra characters may be :

Fairies attending the Fairy of the Golden Isles, the Fairy of the Crystal Mountains, and the Fairy of the Silver Rivers.

Evil Imps and Goblins to come at the summons of the Fairy of the Sable Caves.

Pages, Minstrels, Ladies and Gentlemen in Waiting, Men at Arms, Castle Attendants, Cooks, etc.

Note 3. If the play is presented as a pageant with many additional characters, it is suggested that the action take place in the Best, instead of the Second Best Throne Room of the King and Queen. The Second Best Throne Room was rather small and therefore more appropriate for the few characters of the original cast.

Note 4. The first dance may take place in the First Act, when the three Fairies present their gifts to the baby Princess. As many fairies as are desired may be used for this dance. See note 10 for all music.

Note 5. The second dance may be a dance of Imps and Goblins, also in the First Act. They enter with a screaming rush at the words of the Fairy of the Sable Caves:

“Demons and Trolls who dwell in dungeon moats,
Come near, come near—”

Then they join in a wild sinister dance. The Fairy of the Sable Caves stops speaking until they finish the dance, then she continues with:

“Come weave a spell with me!”

They make their exit as she leaves the stage.

Note 6. The third dance may be in the Second Act when the Princess brings in the Golden Ball. Ladies and Gentlemen in Waiting follow her as she enters. They toss the ball back and forth slowly to music. The extra dancers make their exit after the words, “It’s rolling toward the fountain, stop it, quick!”

Note 7. The last dance takes place at the end of the play. Its participants are the additional Pages, Minstrels, Jesters, Ladies and Gentlemen in Waiting, Men at Arms, Castle Attendants, Cooks, etc.

If this dance is desired it will be necessary to insert a few lines after the King’s speech ending:

“Rise Son, I give my daughter unto you,
And half my kingdom shall be yours as well.”

INSERT.

QUEEN.

Call all the people of the palace here,
That they may all rejoice in this glad day.

COURTIER (*Goes to the door and calls*).
What ho! Attendants of the palace all
Your presence is desired by the Queen!

KING (*as they enter*).
Let there be revelry and mirth and joy.
The evil spell is broken, and here stands
Your future king!

QUEEN.
Come, minstrels, strike the lute
And let the clarion play.

PRINCESS (*clapping her hands joyfully*).
Let's dance!

PRINCE.
Yes, dance
The dead dust of a hundred years away.

Note 8. If the play is too long with the suggested additions it is possible to omit Scene 2, Act II., and Scene 1, Act III.

PROPERTIES.

Note 9. The most important properties are tapestries, the cradle, crowns, headdresses, parchments, the Fairies' gifts, swords, spears, scepter—armor, if there are men at arms, the spinning wheel and distaff.

The tapestries may be made by painting with house paints upon burlap. Crowns, headdresses and armor may be made out of heavy buckram painted with silver paint; the parchments, of strips of ordinary brown wrapping paper, painted with white house paint, then roughly illuminated with lines of gold paint, touches of green and red water colors added, and then hand

printed in heavy ink. The white paint must be put on thinly, with a rotary movement of the brush. . . . The Crystal Globe of Wisdom may be a crystal colored Christmas tree ornament.

For the last scene in the last act, an excellent effect is gained by fastening great cobwebs of woven string across the front of the stage, and by putting smaller ones over the sleeping figures. There is a spider web pattern used in linen hand drawn work, which may be made many times larger.

Note 10. Music for the Sleeping Beauty.

ACT I.

- (1) Fairy Dance around the Cradle.
Minuette in G, Beethoven.
(Victor Record 17,934-B. Natalie and Victor Bashko.)
- (2) Dance of Evil Imps.
Marche Slave, Tschaikowsky.
(Victor Record 70050. Victor Herbert's Orchestra.)
Play first part only, slow movement—stopping before portion is reached where old National Anthem is used.
- (3) Music while the Fairy of the Silver River changes the spell.
Minuett in G—first part played softly.
- (4) Exit—
Chanson Louis XIII and Pavane—Couperin-Kreisler.
(Victor Record 64,292. Fritz Kreisler.)

ACT II.

- (1) Game with Golden Ball.
Paderewski's "Minuette."
- (2) End—where Princess and Court go to sleep.
Minuette in G played softly.

ACT III.

Dance of Court.

Minuette—Boccherini ("Celebrated Minuette.")

(Victor Record 64,614. Fritz Kreisler.)





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